

to the discharge of elderly patients. This has increased the turnover and shortened the length of stay without an increase in transfer of patients to the geriatric unit.

This book is a useful summary of an important problem and will be of interest to physicians in both general and geriatric medicine.

RWS

STATISTICAL METHODS IN BIOLOGY. By NTJ Bailey. Second Edition. (Pp viii + 216. £3.95). London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1981.

THE first edition of this book was published in 1959 and reprinted on ten occasions from then until 1979, thus illustrating its popularity and usefulness. This second edition should be no less in popularity as, with one or two exceptions, it is merely a duplication of the original. In fifteen chapters, the author covers many of the simpler statistical concepts and their uses in biological and medical research, e.g. variability, estimation, significance tests, correlation and regression, and experimental design. Non-parametric and distribution-free tests are increasingly being used in medicine today and the author has recognised this fact by including a new chapter on these. However, as only a few of the simpler non-parametric techniques are discussed the reader should have been directed to a more comprehensive text book on this subject, e.g. Sigel (1956).

In general, the non-mathematically qualified reader should have little difficulty in reading this book. Mathematical symbolism is minimal, no trigonometry, geometry, or calculus is used. All that is required is an elementary knowledge of algebra. The practical examples are well set out and simple to follow. For these reasons I would recommend this book as a useful introduction to the uses of statistical methods in medical research.

Siegel, S. *Non-parametric statistics for the behavioural sciences*. New York, McGraw-Hill, 1956.

JDM

MICROBIOLOGY FOR CLINICIANS. By RN Gruneberg. (Pp 179, Illustrated. £11.95). Lancaster: MTP Press, 1981.

THIS is an exciting book written by an experienced and enthusiastic *clinical* microbiologist who has his feet firmly on the ground and his head well below cloud level. I agree with almost all of his suggestions and statements and in particular his preaching and practice regarding the uses (and abuses) of antimicrobial agents.

One is envious that the staffing situation in the author's laboratories allows him and his colleagues not only to do daily ward rounds but to collaborate so closely with pharmacists and others; the impact of such involvement is undoubtedly beneficial to the patient but the majority of clinical microbiologists are denied such full participation at present whilst we are recruiting and training young medical graduates. Administrators should note that in the last three years the total sum spent on anti-microbials in the author's hospital has not increased at all although the cost of all (other) drugs has doubled in that time !!

The volume is to be welcomed and is very easily read; a few criticisms include the inaccuracy of Koch's postulates (which still have relevance today) and is it necessary (p.16) to tell the clinician that *Neisseria gonorrhoeae* is the causative agent of gonorrhoea ?

The only typographical fault detected is on the 8th line of p.29 where 'organisms' should read "specimens"; I was disappointed that the peroperative use of metronidazole in reducing, if not virtually eliminating, anaerobic sepsis after colonic surgery and hysterectomy does not feature on p.75 since this agent fulfills the criteria stated on p.74.

These few criticisms cannot detract from the immense value of this volume which the reviewer has added to his recommended list of text books for undergraduates at Queen's in the hope that in turn, they will help him to educate his clinical colleagues !!

RG

FUNDAMENTALS OF NEUROLOGY. By John M Sutherland. (Pp 272. £7.95).
Lancaster: MTP Press, 1981.

DR. Sutherland is a distinguished and experienced clinical neurologist. His book is designed as an elementary text with a strong clinical bias. He has succeeded and written a very useful book for medical students and postgraduates sitting examinations. There are numerous lists and tables which they will find very useful and at the end of most chapters there are diagnostic tips of a very practical nature. Perhaps in the next edition he would give greater mention to conditions affecting the spinal cord, such as dissecting aneurysm of the aorta and epidural abscess.

This book is strongly recommended and makes good reading for all practitioners, especially those who have an interest in neurology.

JHDM

ESSENTIAL OBSTETRIC PRACTICE. By Gerald J Amiel. (Pp x + 260, Figs 58. £3.75). Lancaster: MTP Press, 1981.

GERALD Amiel, a senior consultant of many years experience, has written a new book in a traditional and highly personalised style. It is well illustrated with line drawings aimed particularly at midwives in training and would be suitable also for medical students. It is readable, sound and informative, though only briefly touches on the more recent advances in the subject. Scant attention is given to the role of ultrasound and recent concepts about the onset of labour are not developed. Rather the book has a practical approach dealing adequately in an up to date fashion with aspects of the subject encountered by the student in everyday practice.

JWKR

ENZYMOPATHIES. (Volume 10, part 1 of Clinics in Haematology). Edited by William C Mentzer. (Pp vii + 256, Illustrated. £9.75). London, Philadelphia, Toronto: WB Saunders, 1981.

A MINORITY of healthy individuals given the antimalarial drug primaquine will develop acute haemolytic anaemia. The demonstration, some 20 years ago, that this was a consequence of their having low levels of glucose-6-dehydrogenase in their red cells, was the starting point for very intensive studies of red cell metabolism in health and disease and this publication summarises the present state of knowledge in this field.

The first chapters are concerned with the investigation of a patient suspected of suffering from such a disorder and deal in considerable detail with the abnormalities in enzyme systems associated with red cell carbohydrate metabolism.

In the section on methaemoglobin, the contribution made by QH Gibson whilst working in the Queen's University Department of Biochemistry with Professor Harrison is acknowledged. Gibson was the first to define the normal pathway of methaemoglobin reduction, the pathway utilised when methylene blue is added and correctly identified the site of the enzymatic defect in hereditary methaemoglobinemia.